NUMB. CX.

The GUARDIAN.

——Non ego paucis
Offendor maculis, quas aut Incuria fudit
Aut humana parum cavit natura——

Friday, July 17. 1713.

THE Candour which *Horace* shows in the Motto of my Paper, is that which distinguishes a Critick from a Caviller. He declares that he is not offended with those little Faults in a Poetical Composition, which may be imputed to Inadvertency, or to the Imperfection of Human Nature. The truth of it is, there can be no more a perfect Work in the World than a perfect Man. To say of a celebrated Piece that there are Faults in it, is in effect to say no more, than that the Author of it was a Man. For this reason I consider every Critick that attacks an Author in high Reputation as the Slave in the *Roman* Triumph, who was to call out to the Conqueror, *Remember, Sir, that you are a Man.* I speak this in relation to the following Letter, which Criticises the Works of a great Poet, whose very Faults have more Beauty in them than the most elaborate Compositions of many more correct Writers. The Remarks are very curious and just, and introduced by a Compliment to the Work of an Author, who I am sure would not care for being praised at the Expence of another's Reputation. I must therefore desire my Correspondent to excuse me, if I do not publish either the Preface or Conclusion of his Letter, but only the Critical Part of it.

SIR,

* *

'OUR Tragedy Writers have been notoriously 'defective in giving proper Sentiments to 'the Persons they introduce. Nothing is more 'common than to hear an Heathen talking of An-'gels and Devils, the Joys of Heaven and the Pains 'of Hell, according to the Christian System. *Leigh*'s '*Alcander* discovers himself to be a Cartesian in the 'first Page of *OEdipus.*

——The Sun's Sick too,
Shortly he'll be an Earth——

As *Dryden*'s *Cleomenes* is acquainted with the *Copernican* Hypothesis Two thousand Years before its Invention.

I am pleas'd with my own Work; Jove *was not more*
With Infant Nature, when his spacious Hand
Had rounded this huge Ball of Earth and Seas,
To give it the first push, and see it rowl
Along the vast Abyss——

'I have now Mr. *Dryden*'s *Don Sebastian* before 'me, in which I find frequent Allusions to Ancient 'History, and the old Mythology of the Heathen. 'It is not very natural to suppose a King of *Portu-'gal* would be borrowing Thoughts out of *Ovid*'s 'Metamorphosis when he talked even to those of 'his own Court, but to allude to these *Roman* Fa-'bles when he talks to an Emperor of *Barbary*, 'seems very extraordinary. But observe how he 'defies him out of the Classicks in the following 'Lines:

Why didst thou not engage me Man to Man,
And try the Virtue of that Gorgon *Face*
To Stare me into Statue?

A'me de

(Price Two Pence.)